

being collected there. This represents a slight eastward extension of the species' recorded range.

Dusky Wood-Swallow (*Artamus cyanopterus*): Servery and Whittell (*ibid.*, 3rd edn., p. 399) state that this wood-swallow probably ranged in former times to the mulga-eucalypt line and had been recorded as far north as Geraldton and Perenjori. Its range was now contracting to the south-west and south and it was being replaced by the Black-faced Wood-Swallow (*A. cinereus*). That *A. cyanopterus* may still range as far north as the mulga line, at least at times, was proved on June 9, 1965, when I saw a flock of about 25 birds 45 miles south-west of Paynes Find, and collected specimens.

Grey Honeyeater (*Conopophila (Lacustroica) whitci*): My record of this species does not represent any extension of range but as this species is so rarely recognised by observers it may be worth while to place on record that I collected a specimen 3 miles west of Thundelarra Homestead on November 1, 1964, when collecting for the G. W. Cottrell Jr. Expedition on behalf of the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard. The bird was a young individual with an incompletely pneumatized skull, and could not be sexed.

Black-faced Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax fuscescens*). The range of this species in Western Australia is given by Servery and Whittell (*ibid.*, p. 112) as "the islands of the Archipelago of the Reeherehe and the adjoining mainland, eastwards to Israelite Bay." When with the Cottrell Expedition (November 1964) I observed the species some 80 miles to the westward of the Reeherehe Islands. There was a small group of 3-4 birds on rocks about 3 miles east of Hopetoun.

—A. G. MATHEWS, South Perth.

Obtaining Spinifex Gum.—At a meeting of the W.A. Naturalists' Club (February 1964) Mr. A. G. Mathews gave a very interesting description of the gathering of *Kiti* or spinifex (*Triodia*) gum, which was later published (*W. Austr. Nat.*, 9: 96). His account agrees with my observations in the Warburton Range Mission and Cundeelee Mission areas; the former being basically Wongai people and the latter a mixture of Wongai, Pitjandjara and Karonie people but retaining their tribal identities.

While I was collecting in the Fortescue River and Sherlock River area I was assisted by various local residents including coloured people. One such assistant was George, who was currently passing through the stations hunting dogs. He agreed to show me "plenty animals." Unfortunately they usually were gone upon our arrival and a wry shrug with the muttered "old camp that one!" indicated another dry run.

On being asked about *Kiti* he was very vague, saying that it came from the "hills" with an expressive lift of the chin. On pressing him he left me, went into a ravine and came back about 10 minutes later with a lump of *Kiti* about as big as a child's fist. He ex-

plained that he had obtained this by taking an ants' nest and heating it, then beating the heat-softened nest with a stone.

Upon examination I found the ants in question had built nests in the rocks up to 6 in. high, around the base of a spinifex clump, and also covered runways or tunnels from clump to clump of spinifex. Resin from the spinifex stems had been incorporated in the earthy substance of the nests, but how this was done I cannot explain.



Nest of *Iridomyrmex rostrinotus* with spinifex gum.

Previously this information had been partly tendered by Malcolm, an Aboriginal in the employ of Mr. R. Parsons of Coolawanyah Station. This was in June 1957 during the visit of the W.A. Museum collecting trip to Millstream and Tambrey, and Malcolm was loaned us as a guide.

I have seen the same ants at Onslow, throughout the Hamersley Ranges, at Barrow Island and at Halls Creek. Examples collected at Barrow Island have been identified by Mr. A. M. Douglas, of the W.A. Museum, as *Iridomyrmex rostrinotus* Forcl, a central Australian species.

—W. H. BUTLER, Bayswater.